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"UNCLE SAM'S FOREST RANGERS"

Episode #49

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11:30 to 12:30 P.M. C.S.T.

JANUARY 26, 1933

THURSDAY

ORCHESTRA: RANGER SONG

ANNOUNCER: "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers" ---

ORCHESTRA: QUARTETTE

ANNOUNCER: The watchword of Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers is "public service". Over the entire United States, Forest officers stand ready to cooperate in all matters in which the public will be benefited. The Forest Ranger is not only a public officer but a citizen of his home community, and as such he is ready to take part in the community affairs to the fullest extent compatible with his duties as a guardian of the National Forests. ---- On the Pine Cone Ranger District, where Forest Ranger Jim Robbins and his young assistant, Jerry Quick, are managing and protecting the forest resources, it looks as if winter has arrived in good earnest. --- Here comes Jerry, plodding through the snow, to the door of the Pine Cone Ranger Station. ---

(SOUND OF JERRY OPENING DOOR, STAMPING SNOW OFF FEET)

JERRY: Gosh, this snow's getting plenty deep.

JIM: Shut that door, Jerry. You're letting in a blast straight from the North Pole.

(DOOR SLAMS)

JERRY: All right. -- Here's the mail, Jim.

JIM: Hmm. First mail that's come through for two days.

JERRY: Yeah. The postmaster said they were lucky to get that through. The heavy snows are holding up everything.

JIM: Let's see. It looks like it's only the first class mail they brought up, at that.

JERRY: Yeah. That's all.

JIM: Well, let's see what's in the mail bag. --- Hmm -- Here's a letter from the County Seat. Wonder what this is. --- Let's see --- Hmm. Fine --- good.

JERRY: What is it?

JIM: Hmm. Very good. (calls) Oh, Bess --

BESS: (off) Yes, Jim.

JIM: Come here a minute -- can you?

BESS: (coming up) All right. What is it?

JIM: I want to read you this letter I just git. -- Listen-- (reads) "Mr. James Robbins, Pine Cone Ranger Station ---"

JERRY: "James" Robbins, huh? That sure sounds funny.

JIM: (chuckling) Sounds kinda strange to me too, sometimes.

BESS: Yes, I guess you're just plain "Jim" to everybody in the country.

JIM: Uh huh. -- Well, the letter says -- (reads) "Dear Mr. Robbins. In all probability you are familiar with the relief work now being carried on in this state as a part of the general relief program. At a meeting this date, at which the Field Staff representative was present, a committee was formed to handle the relief work in our County, you being selected to handle and represent it in your district. This letter is to advise you that a meeting will be held at 11:00 A. M. the 27th of this month at the County Commissioner's office. Should there be any emergency relief needed in your immediate neighborhood, you will be free to bring it to the attention of the officers of the committee at once. As this matter is very important it is urgently requested that you be present. -- "

BESS: Oh, Jim, isn't that just fine. I'm so glad to know that some of these poor families up here will be able to get some assistance. Why, at our last meeting of the Ladies Aid Society, we spent the whole afternoon ---

JIM: (cutting in) Spilling the low-down on your husbands?

BESS: No indeed. We spent the whole afternoon --

JIM: (cutting in) Discussing the morals of the younger generation?

BESS: Jim. Stop it. -- We spent the whole afternoon trying to devise some plan so we could raise some money to buy clothing and groceries for some destitute families.

JERRY: I wonder just how much real destitution there is around here. Most of these people have good sized gardens.

JIM: Yes, but most of them didn't get much out of 'em. That dry spell in August, you remember --

JERRY: I should say I do -- with all the forest fires we had.

JIM: Well, the Mexican settlement down on Lower Spring Creek was hit pretty hard by the drought. Those people depend a lot on the bean crop, and there were mighty few beans harvested around here last year.

BESS: Well, it certainly is going to be a God-send to some of those poor folks up here to be able to get some help this winter.

JIM: Yep. We've been doing our durndest, but a little help from the outside'll come in mighty handy.

BESS: I should say. Why, think of poor Mrs. Pablita Valdez -- her husband buried just last summer, and left her with nine children, and the oldest only eleven years. She lost her entire crop from the drought, and then that ditch broke and washed out all her garden just when she was beginning to get some green vegetables.

JIM: Say, that's right. I bet she could use some assistance right away. I heard Mary Halloway say the other day that none of her children were coming to school -- and I'll bet it's because the poor little tykes haven't got any clothes to wear to school.

JIM: Yep. Say, Bess, I wish that Ladies Aid Society of yours would kinda look into this matter. If you could investigate the condition of the families that might be in need of help, and make a list of the ones you find to be in actual want, it'd be a great help to me. You see, as soon as the word gets around that I'm a relief agent, there's going to be a general stampede to the ranger station here, and I'm going to need some information.

BESS: I'm sure the Aid Society will be glad to do it, Jim. We've been wondering how we could do something to help. -- I think I'll call a special meeting for tomorrow afternoon.

JIM: Here in the Station?

BESS: Why, of course.

JIM: (chuckling) Well, I see where my desk gets tidied up again, Jerry. Women sure can upset the smooth course of men's affairs.

BESS: Well, your desk certainly needs it.

JIM: (chuckling) Maybe so. Maybe so. -- By the way, Bess. There's another way your Ladies Aid Society might help.

BESS: How is that, Jim?

JIM: Well, there was a pretty fair crop of Pinon (Pine-yone) nuts last fall, and lots of those families living down in the pinon belt gathered up nuts to sell.

JERRY: I'll say they did. I used to see whole families out gathering 'em, -- even kids hardly big enough to walk picking up the cones while the older folks knocked them out of the trees.

JIM: Yes. They brought in more than the store here could handle. I s'pect when you get to checking up on their resources you'll find a number of families have pine nuts on hand that they couldn't sell. So why couldn't the Ladies Aid Society correspond with dealers in the cities and try to find a market for 'em.

BESS: That's a good idea, Jim. Do you suppose they could give me the names of some dealers, down at the store? We could write the letters tomorrow.

JIM: (chuckling) Not so fast, Bess. Maybe it'd be better to find out whether there are any nuts to sell, first

BESS: Oh dear, you always get the best of me, Jim.

JERRY: Well, at least he can't question your energy, Mrs. Robbins --

BESS: If I'd known about this yesterday when Mr. Manzanares was here, I could have found out about those nuts from him. He always knows all about the affairs of the Spanish-American families.

JIM: Was Jose here? What did he want?

JERRY: Oh, I forgot to tell you, Jim. He has a deal on to sell Mr. Burton a stack of hay and he wanted you to measure it up for him. He said Burton had agreed your measure.

JIM: All right, we can go around that way today.

JERRY: But I told him you were too busy, Jim -- that you couldn't do it. He seemed kinda disappointed, but I knew you couldn't go way down there just to measure a stack of hay.

JIM: Why not? We'll go within a short ways of Jose's place today on our way to Spring Creek, and we can ride over in just a little while and help him sell his hay.

BESS: What are you going to Spring Creek for, Jim?

JIM: Got to go down and see about some beaver damage. I hear the beaver have dammed the creek up so it's flooding the road.

BESS: But can you make that trip with that bad knee of yours, Jim?

JIM: Sure.

BESS: You certainly gave it a bad wrench, though, last week.

JIM: Yep. It did have me kinda hobbling around for a couple of days, but it ain't botherin' much now, Bess.

BESS: Well, you'll be home for supper, won't you?

JIM: Yes, -- if we get started right away.

JERRY: I'd better be getting the horses saddled up, I guess.

JIM: Uh huh. I'll be right with you, Jerry, soon as I get my tape to measure up that hay.

BESS: If you go over to Manzanares, ask Jose about the pine nuts, Jim.

JIM: (going off) All right, Bess. I will. -- So long. --

(MUSICAL INTERLUDE)

(SOUND OF HORSES FEET)

JIM: Whoa, Dolly. -- Better let the horses blow a spell, Jerry.

JERRY: Yep. -- Whoa. -- (HORSES STOP) Say, why do you s'pose the beaver were reported doing damage when there was no damage at all?

JIM: Well, the report came from the State Game Warden -- he wrote me that he has an application from someone for a permit to trap the beaver.

JERRY: I see. The fellow didn't figure that we'd investigate the matter. -- But it meant a wild goose-chase for us.

JIM: Yep. -- Well, let's ride over and measure up that hay for Jose. -- Giddap, Dolly.

JERRY: Giddap, Spark.

(SOUND OF HORSES RESUMES: CONTINUES THROUGH FOLLOWING)

JERRY: Say Jim, this business of measuring hay stacks for a rancher -- isn't that kinda outside our regular duties?

JIM: Yes, in a way, it is, Jerry, but let me tell you, son -- a little neighborly act now and then pays good dividends -- especially among these folks down here. It's like chucking your bread out on the waters, as they say -- you do a favor for one of 'em and he'll look for a chance to repay it many fold. -- You know, I consider Jose Manzanares one of my best friends among the Spanish-American folks. When I first came to this district he spent two days showing me over the Slide Mountain country -- he knows this country like a book.

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JERRY: I see.

JIM: Before the days of auto trucks, Jose used to freight supplies up here from the County Seat with a four horse team, and many a fire he's found along the road and put it out before it had a chance to spread. -- I can always depend on Jose whenever I need to, and that's why I'm so anxious to do a little favor for him now. You see, it's only a slight inconvenience to us, but I reckon it means a lot to Jose to be able to sell some hay just now.

JERRY: Yeah. I guess that's right. I'm sorry I turned him down, but I thought ---

JIM: Don't worry. Jose won't carry a grudge. -- There he is now, ridin' across the flat -- Step up, Dolly.

JERRY: (clucks) Spark - let's go. --

(SOUND OF HORSES UP FOR MOMENT)

JIM: (calls) Hi there, Jose ---

JOE: (off) Buenos dias, senors --

JIM: Whoa -- Whoa, Dolly.

JERRY: Whoa. (HORSES STOP)

JIM: Buenos dias, Jose.

JERRY: Howdy, Mr. Manzanares.

JOSE: (up) Buenos dias, senors. -- Mucho snow, uh? -- I hope you I see well dees morning.

JIM: Feeling fine, thanks, Jose. And you?

JOSE: Oh me? I am good, too. Gracias.

JIM: I came to measure your hay, Jose.

JOSE: Este senor, me I got chance to sell heem. Money he scarce nowadays, -- but me I sorree you I geeve dees trouble.

JIM: No trouble at all, Jose. -- Which stack is it?

JOSE: Come - I show --

JIM: Okay -- That's a nice little Pinto you're riding, Jose. Where did you get him?

JOSE: Me, I trade deez Pinto to Senor Jeem? You geeve dinero to boot - quanto?

JIM: (Laughs) There's no horse trade here, Jose. Mrs. Robbins would raise the roof if I traded old Dolly off. She's a member of the Robbins family.

JOSE: Si Senor -- Maybee Senor Queek like deez horse?

JERRY: Not a chance -- It would take more pinto ponies than you could find in the whole country to get Spark.

JOSE: Si-Si senor -- Este hay stack, senor Jeem.

JIM: So that is it, eh? All right. What did you do with that tape, Jerry?

JERRY: Here it is.

JIM: Good, this won't take but a jiffy. -- Here, Jerry, you take this end of the tape. We want the average width and length of the stack and then the over measurement from the ground on one side to the ground on the other side. -- Ready?

JERRY: (off) Okay.

JIM: Let's see -- thirty feet wide, eh? -- Now the legnth. Thirty-two feet. -- All right. Now the over - right to the ground, Jerry. -- All right. I've got it -- fifty feet. -- Now, let's see -- over plus the width is 80 -- divided by four is twenty -- times it's square is 400. -- Four hundred times the length -- what was it? -- Thirty-two? -- that's -- uh -- uh -- it's gettin' kinda complicated, Jerry --

JERRY: (up) That's twelve thousand, eight hundred.

JIM: Yep - that's right. Now divide that by 512 cubic fee, for alfalfa -- that's -- let's see --

JERRY: It comes out twenty-five even, Jim.

JIM: Yep. -- twenty-five tons, exactly, Jose. -- Here's the figures.

JOSE: Dat ees good -- twenty and five ton, and me, I get seven dollars a ton. -- But where you go today, senors?

JIM: Well, I'll tell you, Jose. I've been appointed as key-man in this district on the Relief program, and I was going over to see Senora Pablita Valdez. I heard she's having a hard time of it, with all those kids of hers.

JOSE: Glorio gracias! She do need help - but wait - me I go weeth you. She no spik English much.

JIM: Fine, Jose. I'll be glad to have you go with us. Some of the questions on the questionnaires I don't know how to ask in Spanish, I can make myself understood with the sheep herders all right, but this is kinda out of my regular line.

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JOSE: Si, si, senor.

JIM: All right. -- Got the tape rolled up, Jerry?

JERRY: Yeah. All ready, Jim.

JIM: All right. -- Jose, when we get over to Senora Valdez's, I want you to explain what we're there for, and then we must ask her a lot of questions -- the names and ages of all the children, how many acres she planted last spring, and how much of a crop she --

JOSE: (cutting in, excitedly) Si, si, Senor! Este quien sabe! No frijoles -- no chili -- no alfalfa --!

JIM: Yes, I sabe. She didn't have any crop, but I want to find out if she has any produce on hand -- anything she can sell or anything to eat. If she's destitute, the Committee will help her.

JOSE: Si si, senor. We go now?

(MUSICAL INTERLUDE)

(SOUND OF HORSES)

JIM: Whoa, Dolly. (HORSES STOP) Here's the parting of the ways, Jose.

JOSE: Si, senor. I go home now.

JIM: I'm sure glad you went along over to Mrs. Valdez with us. Thanks for your help, old timer.

JOSE: No, no, Senor Jeem. I am only too glad. Me, I cannot pay favor you have for me done. Mucho gracias.

JIM: Well, adios, amigo.

JOSE: Adios, adios, amigos. (clucks to horse)

JERRY: Goodbye, Mr. Manzanares.

(SOUND OF JOSE'S HORSE GOING OFF)

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(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE)

JIM: Well, Jerry, home again.

JERRY: Yeah, and I'm glad of it. It sure gets cold when the sun drops behind those mountains.

(SOUND OF OPENING DOOR: STAMPING SNOW OFF FEET)

JIM: (calls) Hey, Bess.

BESS: (off) Yes, Jim?

JIM: Where's the broom, so we can brush the snow off our boots?

BESS: (coming up) Never mind the snow. Come right in. You boys must be about frozen.

JERRY: We ain't any too warm.

(DOOR SHUTS)

BESS: There. -- Well, how did you find things over at Mrs. Valdez's, Jim?

JIM: Worse than I expected, Bess. The poor woman has nothing -- the kids haven't even shoes, so they can't go to school.

BESS: Oh, what a shame!

JIM: Yep. -- Jose Manzanares went along with us to act as interpreter.

JERRY: It didn't seem to me like you needed an interpreter very much, Jim. I noticed that as fast as Jose asked the questions you wrote down all the answers -- that is, all except one, (laughing) and I'm going to tell Mrs. Robbins about that.

BESS: What was that, Jerry?

JERRY: Well, you see, Mrs. Robbins, when they were taking the names and ages of the children, Mrs. Valdez gave one of the boys' names as Jim". Jim here asked if it wasn't "James", and she said very emphatically that no, it was "Jim". And then the next younger boy is named "Robbins" -- and I'll bet if there'd been another one, they'd 've called him "Ranger".

BESS: (laughing) Yes, I knew about those names, Jerry. Jim, here, has quite a few children in this locality named after him.

JIM: (chuckling) Quite a responsibility.

JERRY: I'll say. -- You know, that Mr. Manzanares sure seems to think a lot of you, Jim.

BESS: Oh, has Jim ever told you what happened the time we were snowed in for three weeks?

JERRY: No, what was that?

BESS: Are you going to tell him, Jim, or shall I?

JIM: Well, seein' as you brought up the subject, I s'pose I might as well. Lemme get my coat off here, first -- There now. -- Well, you see, Jerry, in these isolated mountain communities, folks have to depend on each other a good deal in times of stress. The winter we had the big snow -- let's see, that was ten or twelve years ago -- yeah, it was 1920 -- we were snowed in for twenty-two days --

BESS: I should say. No mail, and phone lines all down, and the roads all blocked --

JIM: Yep. We were sure cut off from the world. Some of the ranchers claimed six feet of snow on the level -- anyhow, it was impossible to get any distance from home. -- One day -- must have been about the thirteenth or fourteenth day, Jose Manzanares came here about noon -- just about froze, too -- and after getting warmed up a little, he says "Senor Jeem, I am most seek weeth bad luck". "What's the matter, Jose?" I says. "My oldest daughter -- Carmelita --" he says, "She drop over dead deez morning -- me I can no get to town for Padre or what you call coffin and Senor Jeem, I come for you to say what I do". -- Well, there was only one thing to do, so I told him to come back tomorrow and I'd have a coffin for Carmelita.

BESS: My, how you worked on that coffin -- nearly all night.

JIM: Yes, and Bess helped too. I've always believed she had to use some of her own skirts for enough material to cover the outside --

BESS: Yes, I did, Jim -- even one of my silk skirts -- but then I was only too glad to do it.

JERRY: Gosh, that wasn't a very pleasant job, was it?

JIM: Not exactly -- but you know, Jerry, when you love in out-of-the-way communities like this, the most you can do sometimes is little enough. -- Well, Bess and I got the coffin finished by next morning, and 'long about noon Jose and two of his boys came over with a home-made sled and we took it over to his place. Bess went along too --

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BESS: I think that's the last time I've been on snow shoes.

JERRY: That must've been some trip for you, Mrs. Robbins.

BESS: Oh, I stood it pretty well.

JIM: Well, we buried Carmelita in a snow drift, temporarily. -- Conducting burial services ain't exactly my line, but I managed it with a kind of a mixture of English and Spanish and later on when the roads were open the coroner came up, and the old Padre, and the regular services were held.

JERRY: I think I see now, Jim, what Jose Manzanares was thinking about today when he said "I can no pay favors you have for me done".

JIM: (chuckles)

BESS: Well, supper's ready.

JIM: (chuckling) I'll fool you this time, Bess. So am I.

(FADEOUT)

ANNOUNCER:

Well, folks, there's another winter day for you on the Pine Cone Ranger District.

Next Thursday at this time our old friend Ranger Jim Robbins and Jerry Quick will be with us again. "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers" comes to you as a presentation of the National Broadcasting Company, with the cooperation of the United States Forest Service".

pmp - 11:30 A. M.
January 24, 1933.

